The ICAR designed and fabricated a prototype for hitching mechanisms of the transplanter to the power tiller which is ready for test. Further, Korean and Chinese transplanters were evaluated for planting hybrid rice. The Farm Machinery Training and Testing Institutes (FMT & TIs) imparted training on pre-harvest technology which included training on equipment use for land preparation, seeding and planting, inter-culture, plant protection measures and irrigation equipments. The trainings on post harvest technology were conducted on operation of combine harvesters, self-propelled and tractor operated reapers, threshers, straw-reapers, cleaners, graders, etc. The FMT&TIs have trained 4710 trainees during 2003-04 and 5665 trainees during 2004-05.

The Central Government supported various schemes for education of farmers on modern crop management methods. Establishment of Agri-Clinic and Agri-Business Centers which were started in 2002-2003 continued in last two years also. In this scheme agriculture graduates are provided training in Agri-Business development for establishment of Agri-Clinic Centres aimed at providing fee based advisory and other support service to the farmers. Further, during 2004-05 new schemes on Mass Media Support to Agriculture and Kissan Call Centers were initiated by Central Government. Kissan Call Centers operate through toll free lines throughout country to provide expert advice to farmers. Mass Media Support to Agriculture is focusing on use of Doordarshan infrastructure for providing related information and knowledge to farming community.

Assistance to water scare States

1279. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that agricultural production is adversely affected in water scarce States like Tamil Nadu in case of failure of monsoon;

(b) whether Government have plan to help such States tide over this problem so that national annual crop production is not affected; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) Yes, Sir. The failure of monsoon has

severe adverse imapct on the agricultural production. In 2002-2003, several states including Tamil Nadu were adversely affected by drought caused by serious deficiency in rainfall from the monsoon. As a consequence, foodgrains production sharply declined to 174.77 million tonnes in 2002-2003 from 212.85 million tonnes in the previous year. Similarly, oilseeds production in the country declined from 20.66 million tonnes to 14.84 million tonnes during the same period. Unlike at the all India level, for Tamil Nadu rainfall from the North-East monsoon is more important than the rainfall from the south-west monsoon as it receives from rainfall from North-East monsoon. Accordingly, for Tamil Nadu, the deficiency in the total rainfall *vis-a-vis* normal from both South-West monsoon and the North-East monsoon has serious implications for agricultural production. In the case of Tamil Nadu the production of foodgrains declined sharply from 7.73 million tonnes in 2001-2002 to 4.44 million tonnes in 2002-2003 while the production of oilseeds declined from 1.31 million tonnes to 0.76 million tonnes during the same period.

(b) and (c) In order to help the states suffering from water scracity, the Government has accorded priority to dryland farming. Accordingly, the scheme "Enhancing Sustainability of Dry Land Farming Systems" being formulated by the Government, aims at addressing issues like rainwater harvesting and its efficient utilization in situ soil moisture conservation use of organic manures, alternate land use, and adoption of improved dry land farming technologies. The focus of the scheme is on the arid and semi arid regions of the country, particularly in the districts having law annual rainfall and less coverage under assured irrigation in the States of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

A sum of Rs. 2.00 crore has been allocated for the scheme during 2005-06.

Production of edible oils

1280. SHRI THENNALA G. BALAKRISHNA PILLAI:
SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the production of edible oil in the country is going down year after year;